

Diversity Council Recommendations: Status Report January 2010

- A. Hiring processes across state government must be standardized for greater efficiency; therefore, the recruitment and selection process must be consistent with the DAS "Applicant Screening Manual."

DAS has begun reviewing departments' hiring practices. Reviews have been completed for three departments:

- *Natural Resources*
- *Iowa Veterans Home*
- *Revenue*

Reviews are soon to be completed for:

- *Iowa Communications Network*
- *Inspections and Appeals*
- *Public Health*

Reviews are just beginning for:

- *Transportation*
- *Education*
- *IPTV*
- *Vocational Rehabilitation*

- B. Departments should strive to have a hiring pool of applicants of diverse background, i.e. disability, ethnicity, gender, and age. Justification must be made to the Director when a qualified candidate in an underutilized category is not hired.

The following departments require the Director or a designee to review all underutilized hires before offers are made:

- *Corrections*
- *Public Safety*
- *Workforce Development*
- *IPERS*
- *PERB*
- *ICN*
- *Administrative Services*

- C. DAS must ensure next year's Diversity Plans are specific in identifying methods that departments will use in expanding, when applicable, the diversity of their workforce.

DAS, with input of a subcommittee of the Diversity Council, is working to develop a workforce planning tool that can be used for diversity planning and reporting. This tool requires that agencies identify their workforce needs, and then plan to increase their workforce diversity accordingly. This plan will be fine-tuned as we have practice in its use.

- D. Department Directors' performance evaluations should include a diversity component, which would reflect specific achievements in the areas of diversity recruitment, hiring, training, and retention.

DAS suggests that the following be included in each Director's performance plan. Departments must implement policies that further the hiring and retention of a diverse workforce. Directors will be reviewed based on the diversity in their workforce, and the activities in which their department engaged to foster an environment to allow all employees the opportunity to succeed professionally.

- E. The Governor should commission DAS to review, evaluate, and make necessary changes to the current Affirmative Action Process within state government; including, refining the data used in the Affirmative Action Report.

DAS has received significant input from the Attorney General's Office on ways this program can be improved. Our next step is to bring in outside expertise to further develop our plan. In view of the current financial difficulties, this may be problematic and the changes to the program may be more incremental than broad for the time being.

- F. The Governor should consider hiring a Diversity Inclusion Officer – whose job description would be developed by DAS – or expand the role of the Affirmative Action Officer to include diversity initiatives.

With the current financial situation, this will be difficult to do immediately. DAS will have a team of Robin Jenkins and Jesus Estrada that will do this work until other plans are made.

- G. The Governor should lead by example to build a strong statewide commitment to diversity and strengthen diversity efforts in all three branches of government. In so doing, the Governor should consider inviting a person from the Regents, the Judicial Branch, and the Legislative Branch to join the Diversity Council.

There currently are openings on the Diversity Council, so there is an opportunity to include others.

- H. Diversity training should be mandatory for employees in all three branches of government.

All managers and supervisors in the Executive Branch have been trained and DAS currently offers ongoing diversity training for managers and supervisors. In addition, nearly all employees in the Executive Branch were trained by the end of 2009. Ongoing diversity sessions are scheduled for new employees or any who may have missed the original sessions.

- I. DAS must provide a plan for ongoing training and methods for leadership, recruitment, and hiring to use in integrating diversity into their workplace; specifically:
1. Provide a core of orientation courses for new managers.
 2. Provide follow-up training/reviews for new managers.

DAS is currently developing this plan.

- J. DAS should establish a training curriculum directed toward improving interview skills for current state employees, who are seeking professional development, promotions, or new positions within the State.

This is currently under development and will be offered through PDS in 2010.

- K. DAS should establish a training curriculum for hiring managers on how to be mindful of cultural differences when conducting interviews.

This is currently included in the course "Interview to Hire." It will be expanded upon in 2010.